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ANTI-COMMUNIST UNDERGROUND IN U.S. DESCRIBED

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NORBORNE, Mo., July 15 — The only thing Communists fear in their drive to take over the United States is a strong anti-Communist underground using their own tactics against them, Robert B. DePugh, national leader of the Minutemen, said at his headquarters here today.

He indicated that such an underground already had been formed by naming two far-right groups "that don't even admit they exist." He said they are the American Veterans Against Communism and the International Alliance Against Communism.

DePugh cited also the Defenders of the American Constitution, a group which has headquarters in the Washington, area. "This organization is somewhat similar to the Minutemen," he said.

DePugh said that no attempt has been made to weld the far-right groups into one unit or to form an alliance.

"The continued separation of such organizations is a deterrent to personal aggrandizement or infiltration by the Communists and possible seizure of power," DePugh said.

Underground Operation

The objectives of the Minutemen organization require that a large percentage of the members operate underground, although some of the group's activities are in the open, DePugh said.

"Frankly, the Minutemen's purpose in admitting existence and operating to a limited degree in the open was to permit members to find us," he commented.

Guerrilla tactics, weapons, intelligence, propaganda and espionage are essentials in the training of Minutemen, he said. They originally held maneuvers openly with considerable numbers participating, but now train secretly, often at night, and in small units.

Secrecy Measures

The Minutemen's membership application form, which requires great detail from the applicant, is headed by the word secret in capital letters. Minutemen and applicants corresponding with headquarters of the organization are warned: "Do not put a return address on the outside of the envelope when writing to us."

Applicants are told in a statement on the first page of the membership form:

"The Minutemen are the most dedicated, most active and best disciplined American organization in the fight to preserve our Constitutional Republic. Experience has shown that the greatest single danger to an anti-Communist organization is the possible infiltration by enemy agents as new recruits.

"Although we recognize the applicants' reluctance to give information about themselves, the following data is necessary if we are to judge accurately our new members' degree of sincerity and reliability. These application forms are stored in such a manner as to be quickly and completely destroyed if any attempt is made to seize them."

DePugh said that one thing attracting new followers to his group is "the fact that the average age of Minutemen is about 37, which makes our membership the youngest among the right-wing groups."

He said that the "vigor and courage" of American youth is required if the Communist takeover is to be thwarted.

Files on Reds

The Minutemen have established individual files for "68,000 Communists and fellow travelers" in all parts of the United States, DePugh said.

"We have made virtually no use of this information yet," he continued. "In the past some extreme left-wing groups in this country have assembled files on persons who opposed them and frequently have made vicious use of such material against so-called right-wingers," DePugh said.

"I think it is beginning to dawn on these extremists of the left now that it works both ways," DePugh remarked.

Representative Henry B. Gonzalez (Dem.), Texas, said he has evidence the Minutemen are partly supported by the Department of Defense. He said the Minutemen appear to be receiving

free ammunition and weapons from the Defense Department through a little-known program to promote civilian marksmanship.

DePugh shrugged off the Representative's assertions.

"Most Minutemen already own a rifle of their own preference when they join the organization and wouldn't find it necessary to buy one from the Government. The purchase of ammunition is no problem," he said.

Org 1 Minutemen
Org 1 American Veterans
Against Communism
Org 1 International Alliance
Against Communism
Pers: DePugh, Robt. B